



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/825,084	04/02/2001	Ian Catley	112740-187	1678

29177 7590 04/19/2006  
BELL, BOYD & LLOYD, LLC  
P. O. BOX 1135  
CHICAGO, IL 60690-1135

EXAMINER

AL AUBAIDI, RASHA S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

2614

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/825,084

Applicant(s)

CATLEY ET AL.

Examiner

Rasha S. AL-Aubaidi

Art Unit

2614

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 03 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 4-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 2 and 4-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Response to Amendment*

1. Applicant's amendment filed on 01/03/2006 has been entered. Claim 7 has been amended. No further claims have been canceled. No claims have been added. Claims 2 and 4-7 are still pending in this application, with claim 7 being independent.

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. Claims 4 and 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Davis et al. (US PAT # 4,436,962) in view of Herrick et al. (US PAT # 5,521,970) and further in view of Romero (US PAT # 3,737,587).

As for claim 7, Davis discloses a method of providing team functions (*or group coverage*) in a communications network (*or telephone system*) (See abstract, lines 1-3) having plurality of subscriber terminals (*or call coverage station*) (See Fig. 9, elements 902, 903, 104), each subscriber terminal having at least one subscriber line associated therewith (See col. 2, lines 64-67), the method comprising, assigning the plurality of subscriber lines to a call acceptance group (*or group coverage*) (See col. 1, lines 55-61 and col. 11, line 44 through col. 12line 3), switching the call to the first subscriber terminal (*or principle station*) and signaling a second subscriber terminal (*or simultaneously*) for call answering when the call is received under a first operating mode (as read on "each of the stations of a pre-specified coverage group is flashed"); and signaling the call in parallel on a second subscriber line for call answering a second

subscriber terminal when the call is received under a second operating mode; and signaling said call in parallel on the first subscriber line and on the second subscriber line for call answering on said first and second subscriber terminals (See col. 1, lines 53-65).

It can be seen that Davis et al. lack the limitation specifying “encompassing multiple communication system” and “[assigning the plurality of subscriber lines to a call acceptance group] among a plurality of the multiple communication system.”.

In regards to this, Herrick et al. teaches ““Specifically according to the invention, in response to invocation of call coverage for a call that is connected to a first switch, the first switch connects the call to a second switch that serves a call-covering endpoint of the call, and also the first switch signals the second switch that the call is a coverage call. In response to receiving the signaling, the second switch determines the availability of the call-covering endpoint to receive the call. If the call-covering endpoint is available, the second switch alerts (e.g., *rings*) the call-covering endpoint of the call, and also signals the first switch that the call-covering endpoint is available.

Advantageously, since there is substantially no delay between determining the available status of the endpoint and the undertaking (including alerting) to connect the call to the endpoint, there is no danger of the available status becoming obsolete before the connecting can be undertaken. If the call-covering endpoint is not available, the second switch signals the first switch to that effect. In response to receiving the signaling that the call-covering endpoint is not available, the first switch disconnects the call from the second switch. Advantageously, in this latter case, the

Art Unit: 2614

call is again merely connected to the first switch as it was prior to commencement of the coverage efforts, the first switch has not lost control of the call to the second switch, and hence the first switch can continue to attempt to cover the call as dictated by the coverage path of the endpoint that was the original destination of the call. The total net effect of the invention is that call coverage works—from a user viewpoint—identically across a network of switches as it does on a single switch.” (See Summary of the Invention, Col. 2, lines 11-40).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to further modify the method by configuring the call acceptance group such that first said first subscriber terminal (See Fig 1, element 11) and said at least second subscriber terminal (See Fig. 1, element 22) belong to multiple communications systems (See Fig. 1, *PBX 10* and *PBX 20*), as taught by Herrick et al.; thus providing a method for call forwarding in which –from a user viewpoint- the call coverage across a network of switches behaves identically, as it does on a single switch.

The combination of Davis in view of Herrick do not specifically teach that the “call answering capability is maintained by all the subscriber terminals...”.

However, Romero specifically teaches that a user is able to answer a call from any station that is associated with same group (col. 1, lines 55-62).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to incorporate the feature of having the user being able to answer the call from any station, as taught by Romero into the combination of Davis

and Herrick in order to provide the use with speed and convenience. For example, the user can answer the call at any station from the call acceptance group.

As for claim 6, Davis et al. also discloses that a call made to the first subscriber line is diverted to a second subscriber terminal on which corresponding user information was entered (See Claim 15 of Davis et al.).

Claim 4 is rejected for the same reasons as claim 7.

3. Claims 2 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Davis et al. (US 4,436,962) in view of Herrick et al. (US 5,521,970), in view of Romero and further in view of Brown et al. (US 5,309,028).

It can be seen that the combination of Davis, Herrick, and Romero lack the limitation specifying “wherein a call acceptance group is set up for each first subscriber line” and “wherein a call made to a first subscriber line is transferred in the first operating mode, following input of user information, to the at least one further second subscriber line on which the call made to the first subscriber line was signaled, and a call diverted to the second subscriber line is picked up in the second operating mode, following input of user information, on an associated first subscriber line.”

Brown et al. teaches “A principal can have all of his calls covered by his personal secretary [...] backup secretaries would only answer after sufficient time that the

Art Unit: 2614

personal secretary is unlikely to answer. The calls are offered to both the covered and covering terminal at the same time.” (See Background of the invention, Column 2, lines 33-39). Brown et al. further teaches, “Three principals [Bob, Steve and Dick] each have a personal secretary. Each secretary Ann, Bev, and Joy has three monitor feature buttons and three monitor lamps to indicate the collective status of the call appearances on [each executive] terminal.” (See Detailed description, Column 5, lines 25-35 and Figure 1).

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made, to modify the combination of Davis, Herrick and Romero, as per the teachings of Brown et al.; so that the secretaries on secondary subscriber lines will be able to monitor and answer calls for more than one executive first subscriber lines on different call acceptance groups.

As per the limitation specifying “a first subscriber line is transferred...following input of user information” may be read for example on the executive using the “XFER” button on his or her station to transfer a call to his or her secretary (See Fig. 2).

### ***Conclusion***

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Rasha S. AL-Aubaidi whose telephone number is (571) 272-7481. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Art Unit: 2614

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Wing Chan, can be reached on (571) 272-7493.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



**RASHA S. AL-AUBAIDI**  
**PATENT EXAMINER**  
**Art Unit 2614**  
**04/03/2006**